

Documents on Diplomacy: The Source

Recruiting Lafayette 1776

Paris, December 6, 1776

Sir,

The desire which the Marquis de la Fayette shows of serving among the troops of the United States of North America) and the interest which he takes in the justice of their cause makes him wish to distinguish himself in this war, and to render himself as useful as he possibly can; but not thinking that he can obtain leave of his family to pass the seas, and serve in a foreign country till he can go as a general officer, I have thought I could not better serve my country, and those who have intrusted me, than by granting to him in the name of the very honorable Congress the rank of Major General, which I beg the States to confirm to him, to ratify and deliver to him the commission to hold and take rank, to count from this day, with the general officers of the same degree

His high birth, his alliances, the great dignities which his family holds at this Court, his considerable estates in this realm, his personal merit, his reputation, his disinterestedness, and above all his zeal for the liberty of our provinces, are such as to induce me alone to promise him the rank of major general in the name of the United States. In witness of which I have signed the present, this 7th of December, 1776. . . .

SILAS DEANE

Source

"Emperor Dead" and Other Historic American Dispatches, Edited by
Peter D. Eicher, p. 29; Washington, D.C.: 1997